

Definition and Meaning of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPACs)

Information and knowledge age have triggered revolutionised thinking and outlook among the librarian as a result of changes in information- seeking behaviour of the people. The introduction of ICT in core cataloguing process has forced cataloguing librarians to the direction of adopting new forms of catalogue known as Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC). Online Public Access Catalog is an online device that makes it easier for users to access documents such as books and other information resources in the library.

Pierre Le Loarer defines OPAC as " a database describing documents via bibliographic entries composed of fields some of which may be queried (essentially the author, title and subject fields for querying by the public). Gorman has characterized an on-line catalogue as an "integrationist" and defines it as "a bibliographic control system that allows access through many access points (conventional and "unconventional"; single and in combination.

Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science (ODLIS) defines as: "An acronym for online public access catalogue a database composed of bibliographic records describing the books and other materials owned by a library or library system, accessible via public terminals or workstations usually concentrated near the reference desk to make it easy for a user to request the assistance of a trained reference librarian. Most online catalogues are searchable by author, title subject and keywords and allow users to print, download or export records to an e-mail account. In essence, OPAC is a card-based device that can be accessed through an electronic device and/or computer. It is designed to replace the old fashion card catalogue system and to enhance the easy

and quick location of information resources in the library by users. OPAC is user friendly and can be used by anybody irrespective of the users' background. This is because OPAC is designed to proffer help during information search and even the search results are displayed in a system that is easy to read, interpret and comprehend.

How to Use OPAC

1. Connect to the library online and click OPAC link
2. Log in to an account with a password data (though some systems do not require an account)
3. View the information about the library and its contents
4. Search for information through a title, author, or subject

Then, the result of the search provides electronic access where each item or document items are physically located

Merits of OPAC

1. They are interactive and user-friendly.
2. They provide quick and easy access to library materials.
3. They provide a more interactive and thorough way to search for Materials.
4. Updates can be done quickly and easily.
5. Users can often access the OPAC remotely.
6. Contents are specific to each library. They can include information about a wide array of sources (books, newspapers, periodicals, etc).
7. Some sources are even accessible just by clicking OPAC

Demerits of OPAC

1. They may limit the number of actual visitors to the library.
2. Their ease of use may hamper more thorough searches.
3. Spelling errors or keying mistakes can cause frustration with missed searches.
4. When technology is unavailable, as in an Internet outage, for example, searches will be halted.
5. Slow Internet make searches laborious.
6. If the use of an actual card catalogue is necessitated, some people may not have learned how to do so.
7. Some sources, such as old printed manuscripts, art pieces, and/or maps or blueprints, are not always included in an OPAC.

CATALOGUING RULES

Cataloguing rules have been defined to allow for consistent cataloguing of various library materials across several persons of a cataloging team and across time. Users can

n use them to clarify how to find an entry and how to interpret the data in an entry. Cataloging rules prescribe:

- which information from a bibliographic item is to be included in the entry,
- how this information is presented on a catalogue entry or in a cataloguing record, and
- how the entries should be sorted in the catalogue.

The larger a collection, the more elaborate cataloguing rules are needed. Users cannot and do not want to examine hundreds of catalogue entries or even dozens of library items to find one item they need. Currently, most cataloguing rules are similar to, or even based on, the *International Standard Bibliographic Description* (ISBD), a set of rules produced by the *International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions* (IFLA) to describe a wide range of library materials. These rules organize the bibliographical description of an item in the following areas:

1. Title and statement of responsibility (author or editor)
2. Edition
3. Material specific details (for example, the scale of a map)
4. Publication and distribution
5. Physical description (for example, number of pages)
6. Series
7. Notes, and
8. Standard Number (International Standard Book Number)

The most commonly used set of cataloguing rules in the world are the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*, 2nd Edition, or AACR2 for short.

Cataloguing Codes

A cataloguing code is a set of rules for the guidance of cataloguers in preparing entries for catalogues so as to ensure uniformity in treatment. Such codes include rules for subject cataloguing and for filing and arranging entries. Some of the cataloguing codes are:

1876 Cutter's Rules by Charles A. Cutter

1908 Anglo-American Code

1934 Classified Catalogue Code by Dr. S. R. Ranganathan

1949 American Library Association (ALA) Rules

1949 Library of Congress Rules for Descriptive cataloguing

1967 Anglo-American cataloguing Rules

CATALOGUING OF NON-BOOK MATERIALS

The materials that fall in the category of non-book materials are various called "non-book, non-print, audio –visual, media or multi-media". Obviously, these materials are not handled in the same way as monographs because of their nature and appearance. They cannot be shelved with corresponding monographic materials. Therefore, the bibliographic descriptions are significantly different from those of monographs; this also affects their location in a library's collection. The cataloguer must describe the non book materials vividly and records them in the main catalogue. Many problems faced in the past by cataloguer in the descriptive cataloguing of non book materials have been eased by the publication of AACR2 with its integrated approach to the description of non book materials.

Chapter 3 to 10 of AACR2 covers the following non book materials:

- Chapter 3 – cartographic materials e.g. maps, atlases, globes etc.
- Chapter 4 – Manuscripts
- Chapter 5 – Published Music
- Chapter 6 – Sound recordings
- Chapter 7 – Motion pictures and Video recordings
- Chapter 8 – Graphic materials
- Chapter 9- Machine readable data file (MRDF)
- Chapter 10 – Three dimensional object, artifacts and realia.

1. **CATALOGUING OF MANUSCRIPT:** Most libraries use local schemes (local scheme makes use of original catalogue because it is not done elsewhere i.e catalogue in publication [CIP]) based on AACR2 for the descriptive cataloguing of manuscript. This is because manuscripts are unique as no other copy may be available anywhere else, so there is no cataloguing copy of the material elsewhere. **N.B:** [You make use of local scheme in which the library produces and must be renewed every time there is advancement in the acquisition of the library]. It make use of the original catalogue and not copy catalogue because it cannot be found elsewhere {it is not published}.

1. **MUSICAL COMPOSITION:** The description of music is written for solo instrument such as the piano is relatively straightforward while those written for several instrumental or vocal parts are/is problematic.
2. **SOUND RECORDINGS- GMD:** The challenge for the cataloguer of sound recording is premise on the fact that extremely disparate i.e varies materials often appear on a single physical item. However, the rule for coping with this challenge is in AACR2 rule 6.1g.
3. **MOTION PICTURES & VIDEO RECORDING:** The source of information for the cataloguing of motion pictures and video recordings is a major problem. This problem is complicated by the multitude of people responsible for their production.
4. **GRAPHIC MATERIALS:** These includes original arts, art prints, art reproduction, filmstrips, flashcards, flipcharts, photographs, pictures, postal, slide, stereographs, transparency, wall charts, post cards etc. The decision as to catalogue and classify graphic materials taken by each library. But generally, most libraries only catalogue but not classify them.
5. **MACHINE READABLE DATA FILE {MRDF}:** Even though this material is relatively recent, the need to catalogue them like other materials was recognized as far back as 1970 by the ALA's catalogue and classification section.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR CATALOGUING NON BOOK MATERIALS

S/N	MATERIALS	CHIEF SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR CATALOGUING
1.	Atlases	Title page (as for book)
2.	Other cartographic materials	Cartographic item itself, container or case.
3.	Manuscripts	

4.	Published Music	Title page, cover or caption.
5.	Sound recording <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disc• Tape (open reel to reel)• Tape cassette• Tape cartridge• Roll	Label, container, accompany textual material.
6.	Motion pictures & Video recordings	Film itself, container itself, label, and accompany textual material.
7.	Graphic material	Item itself, label, container, and accompany textual material.
8.	Machine Readable Data File (MRD F)	Label, accompany documentation, and other sources.
9.	3D object, Realia and Artefacts	Object itself and other accompany textual material.

GENERAL MEDIUM DESIGNATION (GMD)

The medium designators follow the title immediately [title] in square brackets, but if an item contains parts belonging to material fallen into two or more categories, and if none of them is the predominant constituent of the item, then use "multimedia" or "kit" as the general medium designator.

S/N	TYPE OF MATERIAL	APPROPRIATE GMD
1.	Cartographic material	[Map] [Globe] [Text] For Atlas.
2.	Manuscript	[Manuscript]
3.	Music	[Music]
4.	Sound recordings	[Sound recordings]
5.	Motion pictures & Video recordings	[Motion pictures] [Video recordings]
6.	Graphics	[Arts Original] [Chart] [Slide] [Film strip]

		[Flash card] [Picture] [Technical drawing] [Transparency]
7.	Machine Readable Data File (MRDF)	[Machine Readable Data File]
8.	3 Dimensional Artifacts and Realia	[Diodrama] [Game] [Microscopic slide] [Model] [Realia]

N.B: If the access point is the title, you write it and continue; but if the access point is the author, you indent.